

THE MUHAMMADIJAH: A STUDY OF AN ORTHODOX
ISLAMIC MOVEMENT IN INDONESIA

Howard M. Federspiel

The Muhammadiyah is generally recognized as belonging to that trend among Indonesian Muslims which reflects traditional Islamic values developed in the Middle East, and hence the label "orthodox"¹ may be applied to the movement. This orthodoxy stresses the "Oneness of God" (*tawhid*), proper behavior (*akhlak*) and proper performance of ritual obligations (*fiqh*). Transcending these beliefs and behavior is a concern that such religious values are the paramount consideration in life to which all other values must be subservient. The Muslim individual is expected to subject himself to the teachings of God wherever he is and to perform faithfully those obligations. He is also obliged, because of loyalty to the community of believers (*ummah*) and because there are obligations that only the community can fulfill, to establish, whenever possible, community responsibility for fulfillment of religious obligations.²

The Muhammadiyah was founded in 1912 with the announced purpose of stimulating Muslim religious education and studies and promoting the religious life of the members of the new organization. It had grown out of the efforts of Ahmad Dachlan who was active in central Java providing religious education to boys studying in secular schools.³ In the early years of Muhammadiyah's existence, its members stressed the importance of Muslim activism,

-
1. The term santri is often applied to Indonesian Muslims, particularly those on Java, who regard themselves as orthodox Muslims and who seriously follow orthodox teachings. In this essay, the Muhammadiyah will be judged on how its philosophy and activities compare with orthodox teachings in the wider Muslim world rather than in its Indonesian context alone. Consequently, the term "orthodox" will generally be used, rather than santri.
 2. The orthodox group to which the Muhammadiyah belongs can be distinguished from two other types of Muslims that exist in Indonesia. One identifies with Islam as it has combined with religious values developed in Southeast Asia prior to Islam's arrival, and the other group identifies with secularist themes developed in the West. Both of these trends are opposed to the totalistic philosophy of the orthodox Muslim since they often accord certain non-Islamic considerations a higher priority in their scale of values than the orthodox Muslim does.
 3. Deliar Noer, "The Rise and Development of the Modernist Muslim Movement in Indonesia during the Dutch Colonial Period (1900-1942)" (Ithaca, Cornell University Ph.D. dissertation, 1963), pp. 115-117.

particularly in advancing social welfare activities and improving religious education, which was then of a very low quality. The movement was supported by middle class Muslims, especially those engaged in trade, first in Jogjakarta and then in other urban areas on Java.

The Muhammadiyah was actually a part of the reform movement that first occurred in orthodox Islam during the latter part of the nineteenth century and had its major impact on Southeast Asia in the first quarter of the twentieth century. The Muhammadiyah was only one of several movements advocating Islamic reform in Indonesia during that period, but it developed its own distinctive outlook and style in that it remained on the periphery of nationalist politics, sought to cooperate with the legal (Dutch) government, and included both the study of religion and Western-style courses in its schools. This outlook varied from area to area as the Muhammadiyah expanded on Java and onto the Outer Islands of Indonesia. On Sumatra, for example, it took on many attitudes of the militant reform movement that preceded its arrival. Consequently, its branches there were more politically inclined than on Java, and greater stress was placed on reform in religious ritual and belief, rather than on the accommodation of Islam with Western learning, as was the case on Java.

The growth of the Muhammadiyah in the early years was relatively slow, and, in 1925, it had a membership of only 4,000. But even then its record of accomplishments was impressive--it operated 55 schools, serving 4,000 students; two major medical clinics; an orphanage; and a poor-house. The expansion of the Muhammadiyah to Sumatra and the Outer Islands in 1925 signalled the start of rapid growth. By 1930, membership had increased to 24,000, and, by 1950, membership was 159,000.⁴ The activist theme of the movement has involved the members in a wide number of activities--cooperatives, youth movements, medical work, missionary activity and social work--but it is primarily important for its accomplishments in education and for its role as spokesman for a moderate wing of Islamic reform.⁵ In education, it has developed a network that contained over 4,600 schools in 1963, including several teachers' academies, religious training schools and college faculties. As a spokesman for the moderate wing of reformist Islam, Muhammadiyah leadership has taken positions on various social, religious and national issues that have influenced national life as well as the development of Muslim thought and activity in Indonesia.

The Muhammadiyah's stated philosophy, its teachings and its activities illustrate the concerns of an orthodox Muslim movement, which wishes to reconstitute Indonesian society to reflect those values believed essential for proper living. It is also firmly identified with Indonesia and the Indonesian state as it exists today, even though that state is not primarily guided by orthodox

-
4. Th. Petrus Blumberger, "Moehammadijah," Encyclopaedië van Nederlandsch Oost-Indië, VI; Pusat Pimpinan Muhammadiyah, Suara Muhammadiyah (Mendjelang Peringatan 40 Tahun Muhammadiyah), 28, No. 27 (November 1952), p. 372.
 5. ". . . Makin Lama Makin Tjinta . . .," Muhammadiyah Setengah Abad 1912-1962 (Djakarta: Departemen Penerangan Indonesia, 1963), p. 78.

Muslim themes. An examination of the movement as it has existed in independent Indonesia indicates just how serious the dilemma is for the Muhammadiyah in reconciling its Islamic aspirations to the Indonesian context within which it must operate. Such an examination of the Muhammadiyah's attitudes and reasoning toward other Indonesian groups and toward specific problem areas--such as customary law and secular government--also provides some perception of the problems of accommodation between the orthodox Muslims and Indonesians committed to other value systems, which remains an important issue in the development of a viable Indonesian nation.⁶

The Basic Religious Outlook

The philosophy of the Muhammadiyah is contained in the preamble of its constitution and in the commentary on that constitution⁷ where the interrelationship of God, society and man is discussed. Paramount in the Muhammadiyah's philosophy is the nature of God and His concern for mankind. The preamble opens with a basic statement of Muslim belief, to wit, that there is only one God and that the proper relationship of man to God is an attitude of worship and obedience. The commentary elaborates further that God is the creator of all that exists and that through His commands, to which all creation is subject, He gives order and precedence, so that, for example, night follows day. Because He has mercy, God has sent the message of religion that man might learn the purpose of life and thereby attain happiness. Reason, also a gift of a merciful God, tells man that the religious message is true and assures him that God really does exist. Man then realizes his own essential weakness and turns to God to find strength and guidance. This submission to God is the act of faith and makes a person a believer. Faith--the belief in God the Only One--molds and gives purpose to the lives of Muslims.

The second point in Muhammadiyah philosophy is that social organization is natural and desirable, and in fact, is God's will. Man lives in constant contact with other persons, for he is born into a family and always lives in large social organizations, such as villages and nations. Social organization itself is good, for the interdependent relationship of man results in the highest use of reason. This collective use of reason allows mankind to discover

6. A large number of sources used in the preparation of this paper were written in the Constitutional Period (1950 to 1957) of Indonesian history. It was during that era that the aims, principles and strategies of the Muhammadiyah were restudied and placed in a context fitting with the movement's existence in an independent Indonesian state. Some changes were made later but the basic principles and aims of the movement have hardly been altered at all.

7. Anggaran Dasar Muhammadiyah dan Anggaran Rumah Tangga (Jogjakarta: Pengurus Besar Muhammadiyah, 1952); Tafsir Anggaran Dasar Muhammadiyah (Jogjakarta: Pengurus Besar Muhammadiyah, 1954).

and exploit the secrets of the world for the advancement of human life and the attainment of prosperity. Moreover, the social organization gives continuity to man's quest, for the length of one man's life is short and his work unproductive, unless it is tied to the work of those who have preceded him and those who come after him.

The third major point in Muhammadijah philosophy states that, despite the importance of society, the individual has worth and importance. Hence, the individual is obligated to improve himself and to help shape a proper society to aid in improvement of all mankind. Within the community, the individual has great importance, for the measure of the worth of society is derived from the sum of the good and evil actions of the individuals of that society. The manner of achieving proper goals in life might be discovered through trial and error, but because man's life is short and his knowledge limited, it is incumbent upon him to accept the guidance of God as revealed through His prophets. All of the prophets sent by God have brought the same message to mankind, namely, that "there is no God but God" and that all mankind belongs to a common community (ummah). To aid man in the formation and ordering of that common community, God sent laws with the prophets, and it is the utmost duty of every believer to revere those laws above all others.

The fourth major point in Muhammadijah philosophy is concerned with the Islamic past and the relationship of that past to the contemporary era. The Muhammadijah acknowledges the importance of the tradition of Islam as it developed in the early centuries of its activity. It also maintains that the vitality of the Muslims is less in modern times than it was formerly and that reform is needed to restore the Islamic world to its former position of strength. The constitution states that Muslims lost political control in certain areas of the world because "moral degradation, spiritual disintegration, intellectual corruption and poverty" occurred in Muslim society. The Muhammadijah subscribes to the teachings of the acknowledged leaders of Islamic reform and modernism of the past century--Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī, Muhammad 'Abduh and Rashīd Riḍā--as the best way to remove these conditions and revitalize Islam. By following the concepts of reform expounded by these men--particularly by undertaking the search for genuine principles in the scriptures of Islam--the Muhammadijah believes that revitalization of Islam will be accomplished.

This statement of the Muhammadijah's philosophy, while expressed in a modernist Muslim framework, iterates several important concepts sanctioned by the orthodox tradition within Islam. The acknowledgment of an all-powerful Creator who has sent a divine law to man through prophets, the concept that the individual has worth and is responsible for his own salvation, and the recognition that a community should exist to serve as a context within which believers function, are all recognized by orthodox Muslims as valid and necessary teachings. Certainly, the form of presentation might differ among orthodox Muslims, but these particular concepts would be acceptable to all. Only on the point of revitalization of Islam would there be disagreement among orthodox Muslims, but, even on this point, traditionalists and reformists can agree that lethargy and deterioration of Muslim vitality over the past several centuries were caused by failure to

follow the genuine principles of Islam.⁸ Where the Muhammadiyah and the other reformists would urge reexamination of religious scripture to rediscover those genuine principles, the traditionalists would claim such principles are evident as they are expounded by the recognized great teachers of Islam, particularly the jurists.

The educational effort of the Muhammadiyah is worth some review at this point because the subject matter indicates just which religious teachings the movement sees as important for youth to know, and presumably, by extension, its entire membership as well. Its first efforts in education--in the first quarter of the twentieth century--were a reaction to the *pondok* schools where a poor quality education was provided in religious subjects. To counter the poor quality and narrow emphasis of the *pondok* schools, the Muhammadiyah established schools that provided instruction in religion and in general subjects taught in Western schools. Such schools (*sekolah umum*) were intended for the general education of Muslim children and were not designed to provide specialized religious training, which was provided in several special schools founded by the movement. Unlike the *pondok* schools, which had stressed rote memorization of involved legal and theological treatises, these general schools of the Muhammadiyah sought to provide students with comprehension of basic Islamic teachings, simply expressed. At about the same time, the Muhammadiyah founded another type of school (*madrasah diniyah*) that provided several hours of religious instruction each week to Muslim pupils regularly enrolled in the Dutch-operated educational system, which offered no instruction in Islam. This supplementary education, still provided in some places to Muslim pupils attending schools of the national education system, concentrates solely on religious subject matter. In both types of school, there is emphasis on teaching pupils the fundamentals of Arabic, on acquainting them with the Qur'an and early Muslim history, and on teaching them the basic obligations required of the individual. The exact content of these teachings was evolved in Muhammadiyah schools during the first two decades of their existence and, with minor adjustments, still remains basically the same.⁹

The study of Arabic is, of course, a necessary ingredient in Islamic education according to all orthodox Muslims, because the scriptures and a large number of orthodox religious texts are written in that language. It is a part of orthodox doctrine that the scriptures may not be studied for comprehension in any language other than Arabic, for in translation the precise meaning of God's

-
8. Despite individual differences among orthodox Muslims, all can be included in one of two major groupings--traditionalists and reformists. The traditionalists include such Indonesian Islamic groups as the Nahdlatul Ulama, Perti and Al-Washlijah. The reformists include such movements as the Muhammadiyah, Al-Irsjad and the Persatuan Islam.
 9. Mahmud Junus, *Sedjarah Pendidikan Islam di Indonesia* (Djakarta: Pustaka Mahmudiah, 1960), pp. 232-244; Sardjono, "Pertumbuhan dan Perkembangan Sekolah Muhammadiyah," *Suara Muhammadiyah*, No. 26 (1963), pp. 4-8.

word could be lost. While translations of the Qur'ān into the vernacular are now generally accepted by most orthodox groups in Indonesia, such translations are regarded only as guides and are usually referred to as commentaries (*tafsīr*), indicating that the Qur'an itself is written in Arabic. In addition to serving as a key to the comprehension of scripture, the stress on Arabic also introduces Muslim pupils to patterns of thought contained in that language and acquaints them with the content of orthodox thought recorded there. Arabic, then, serves as a vehicle for preserving, and even extending, the influence of orthodoxy among Indonesian Muslims. In the two types of general schools operated by the Muhammadiyah, the study of Arabic provides only a rudimentary knowledge of that language, but it is sufficient for reading the Qur'ān and examining selected religious texts. At the training schools for religious scholars, of course, much more intensive instruction is provided, since Arabic is a necessary adjunct to other subjects which rely solely or predominantly upon Arabic texts.¹⁰

Study of religious scripture is a feature of most orthodox Muslim schools. All orthodox Muslim groups, whether traditionalist or reformist, agree that the scriptures contain the moral and philosophical teachings of Islam. While the Muhammadiyah philosophy emphasizes the importance of taking religious principles directly from the scriptures, the training it provides in both types of its general schools is not designed to teach pupils to apply this theory. It is only at the specialized training schools that the deep study of scriptures, both Qur'ān and *ḥadīth* literature, and the methods of extracting principles (*'uṣūl al-fiqh*) recognized in orthodox Muslim scholarship is undertaken. Like most other orthodox Muslim groups, the Muhammadiyah considers the religious scholars the proper interpreters of religious doctrine. The general schools of the movement acquaint the student with the Qur'ān, but do not set aside any specific courses for the study of *ḥadīth* literature, although individual selections are referred to in the study of other subjects.¹¹ In the general schools and the *madrasah diniyah*, the study of the Qur'ān is undertaken with the goal of familiarizing the student with its contents so that it might become a religious guide for everyday living. Study of the Qur'ān is also intended to show that worship in Islam is ordered by God and to prove, according to the teachings of Islam, that Muhammad is a true prophet since his miracles are recorded there.

Concerning basic religious obligations, Muhammadiyah schools teach that a Muslim must believe in the existence of God, His angels, His prophets, the scriptures sent to man by God, the Day of Judgment and the predetermination of things as ordained by God. The specific iteration of these points brings the Muhammadiyah into complete harmony with the general principles developed by classical Muslim theologians--al-Ash'arī and al-Māturīdī, who are regarded among orthodox Muslims as having defined proper religious belief. In addition to proper belief, pupils are also taught the importance of the five necessary actions--confession of faith, ritual prayer, payment

10. Mahmud Junus, Sedjarah Pendidikan Islam, pp. 232-244.

11. H. Dalbar (ed.), "Peladjaran 'Aqid pada Sekolah-sekolah Rakjat-menengah," Tuntunan Tabligh, 1, pp. 60-76.

of the religious tax, fasting during the month of Ramadhan and the performance of the pilgrimage. The stress on these necessary actions, and the emphasis on the general admonition to "promote good" and "banish evil" reflects the Muhammadiyah's concern with Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*), an important ingredient in the measurement of a group as orthodox, even if that concern is limited to the area of ritual, whereas the traditionalists declare that *fiqh* regulates beliefs and morals as well.¹²

Finally, Muhammadiyah schools are concerned about history and its importance to the believer. History is divided into two areas: that concerned with Indonesia, which apparently is required by the Ministry of Education for certification and subsidy of certain Muhammadiyah schools; and that concerned with religious history (*tarikh*), particularly that of the early Muslim era. In the curriculum of the Muhammadiyah schools, national history receives about twice the class time as religious history, although certainly religious history is a supplement to other religious subjects and not a field of knowledge unto itself. This religious history explains the Muslim conception of prophets and the work of such prophets as Ibrāhīm (Abraham), Mūsā (Moses) and 'Isā (Jesus) in revealing the true message of religion to particular peoples, even as Muhammad revealed it to the Arabs and, eventually through his followers, to all mankind. It concentrates, however, on the life of Muhammad and the development of Islam in that period and in the period immediately after Muhammad's death. This history emphasizes the importance of Muslim scriptures in those eras and their value to Muslims of all time. Finally, this religious history surveys the major political developments of Muslim history--the Ummawī, 'Abbāsī and Ottoman empires, the Andalusian age in Spain, and the spread of Islam in Southeast Asia.¹³ These Muhammadiyah courses on history glorify the Muslim past, and particularly the period of Muhammad, and intimate that it contains the ingredients for successful social, political and religious life, worthy of emulation by twentieth-century Muslims. Again, this particular outlook toward the Muslim past is one that is generally shared by all orthodox Muslims, whether traditionalist or reformist.

The educational effort is the most obvious device the Muhammadiyah employs to persuade Indonesian Muslims that religion should be the most important consideration in their own individual lives. During the 1920's, considerable attention was given to this effort by the Muhammadiyah leadership and a special section--the Oemmat Islam--was founded to promote this activity. After World War II, the Madjelis Tabligh section was expanded to cover promotion of Islam in the daily lives of individual members. In both periods indoctrination and propaganda within the movement itself reiterated this theme and suggested ways the individual Muslim could improve his daily devotions. Proper fulfillment of required worship and other obligations was of course, stressed as the

12. "Peringatan bagi sekalian Kaum Muslimin Muhamadijjin," Tuntunan Tabligh, 1, pp. 19-22.

13. Mahmud Junus, Sedjarah Pendidikan Islam, pp. 237-241; Dachlan, "Peladjaran Tarikh pada Sekolah Rakjat-menengah," Tuntunan Tabligh, 1, pp. 93-111.

principal means for attaining this goal. It also advocated activism and participation in activities centered about the mosque and in the Muhammadiyah, which would bring the individual Muslim into contact with other believers who could fortify his interest in religious centered activity. This concern for individual devotion was also apparent in a statement of the Muhammadiyah to its members concerning informal prayer and recitation of religious phrases throughout the day. The statement suggested that, in addition to the five daily ritual prayers, Muslims address short statements to God as they perform normal daily routine. Upon waking, it was suggested that the Muslim recite: "All praise to God Who has given us life and Who has formed all creation." Similar recitations were suggested for entering and leaving a rest room, when drinking water, when dressing, when leaving the home, when going to the mosque and when leaving it, when standing after having visited someone, when preparing for sleep and when awakened in the middle of sleep.¹⁴ Such stress is one line of activism for Muhammadiyah members and pertains to the movement's goal of building a society in Indonesia which regards Islam as its most important consideration.

Differences With Other Orthodox Muslims

In keeping with its reformist outlook, the Muhammadiyah has been concerned with promoting those practices and beliefs among Muslims that it regards as religiously correct and with convincing Muslims to abandon those having no historical justification. A tract distributed by the Muhammadiyah in 1955 succinctly outlined the problem, reflecting an official organizational viewpoint in force since the mid-1920's, when the movement's leadership gave serious attention to the problem for the first time. References appearing in *Suara Muhammadiyah* over the past several years indicate that the same viewpoint continues to prevail. The 1955 tract referred to *bidah* (innovation) and *churafat* (superstition) which were cited as the principal means by which the religious message of Islam has been subject to distortion. *Bidah* was defined as believing that certain behavior and tenets of faith were sanctioned by the Prophet Muhammad when, in fact, they were not. "*Bidah* generally appears because of a desire to increase religious performance, but due to ignorance the action undertaken is not actually that which is sanctioned"¹⁵ by Islam. Hence, *bidah* is an unintentional mistake, but a mistake which should be corrected. *Churafat* is an attachment to religious beliefs and practices associated with other religions, usually from a religion previously professed in a region prior to the arrival of Islam. The Muhammadiyah committee noted that, among Indonesian Muslims, *churafat* has been connected with practices and beliefs persisting from the time prior to Islam's arrival when animism and then Hinduism and Buddhism dominated the archipelago.¹⁶ The committee concluded that practices and beliefs in the category of *churafat* should be expunged as soon as Muslims became aware of their true nature.

14. "Do'a/batjaan untuk sehari-hari," Tuntunan Tabligh, 3, pp. 152-157.

15. Panitya Ketjil Madjlis Tabligh Sub Bid'ah Churafat, "Tabligh menghadapi Bid'ah-Churofat--Agama-agama lain, dsb.nja," Tuntunan Tabligh, 3, p. 47.

16. Ibid.

Reformist Muslims have long regarded as *bidah* traditionalist insistence on the importance of jurisprudential codes as the primary judge of what is and what is not acceptable for Muslims. Muhammadiyah statements have charged that the concept itself is *bidah* because it elevates the codes above scripture and condones certain practices and beliefs that Muhammadiyah doctrine labels *bidah* and *churafat*. The traditionalists justify their position by arguing that the codes are based on principles taken from the scriptures and, as such, have a lasting quality, and that the codes have been developed with regard to the consensus of the learned throughout Islamic history. The modernist Muslims maintain that Muslims should not blindly accept legal precepts of another era (that is, those contained in the codes of jurisprudence), even assuming many such precepts are correct, since to do so would be to disregard the special circumstances of the contemporary for a solution devised for another milieu.¹⁷ Muhammadiyah statements have stressed that Muslims in every age should utilize human intelligence to apply the eternal values of Muslim scripture to contemporary situations and to derive new principles when needed, and to reaffirm older precepts when applicable. According to this viewpoint, constant effort in applying the values taken directly from scriptures will lessen chances that *bidah* and *churafat* will become confused with the genuine teachings of Islam.¹⁸

The view of the schools of jurisprudence has brought the Muhammadiyah into dispute with traditionalists in a number of situations. In the formative years of the Muhammadiyah, prior to 1925, a position had already been taken in the movement condemning *bidah*, but the issue was not emphasized. After that time the effort to expunge *bidah* and *churafat* was given more attention, apparently because of the interest of a new leadership and the expansion of the movement onto Sumatra where Muslim modernists had already taken up the issue. Moreover, it was about this time that the real issues involving *bidah*, that is, change in accepted ritual, became prominent on Java. Consequently, in the 1920's, the Muhammadiyah worked for certain changes in religious ritual, and traditionalist Muslims condemned Muhammadiyah leaders as heretics and apostates for promoting what they regarded as false doctrines. Much of the early animosity was caused by a low level of knowledge among religious scholars in general. Actually, the early reformers seem really to have opposed ignorance and blind prejudice that marked most religious scholars, particularly those who had accepted accretions to Islamic belief and practice and contended that such additions were justified by the Shāfi'ī code. Reform, while apparent among the modernists, also occurred among many traditionalists as well, so that a number of practices rejected by the Muhammadiyah were rejected by many of the traditionalists as well when they applied the criteria for examination used in the Shāfi'ī school of jurisprudence itself.¹⁹ Consequently, the area of disagreement

17. Panitia Pusat Perajaan 40 Tahun Berdirinja Perserikatan Muhammadiyah, Kitab 40 Tahun Muhammadiyah (Jakarta: Muhammadiyah, 1942), p. 32; Tuntunan Tabligh, 3, p. 52.

18. Tafsir Anggaran Dasar, p. 10.

19. Note the attitude of a Muhammadiyah writer toward traditionalists in Umar Hubeisj, "Bid'ah dan Klenik," Gema Islam, 5, No. 82 (August 1966), p. 29; also note the reformist viewpoint of a

between reformists and traditionalists has narrowed since both sides have become concerned with discovering what the historically correct principles of Islam really are, even though they use different methods of examination. Now the two groups generally regard each other as true believers and cooperate in many fields. But their differences remain real as was shown in the early 1950's when traditionalists and modernists confronted one another in *Masjumi*, the Muslim unity party, over the issue of whether the party itself was subject to regulations derived from the jurisprudential schools. When the modernists carried the day, the traditionalists used the decision as a reason for secession from the party. Even in 1970, the two groups feel it necessary to undertake political activity in their individual parties rather than in a unified party, and at least part of the reason for the continued separateness is traceable to the two approaches regarding what is and what is not *bidah*.

There have been several specific matters of belief and practice accepted by many traditionalists but attacked in Muhammadiyah writings as *bidah*. Early in Muhammadiyah history, the principle was accepted that the Friday sermon could be in the vernacular rather than in Arabic, as the traditionalists maintained, although it was recognized by nearly all orthodox Muslim groups that the general ritual of worship had to be recited in Arabic.²⁰ Muhammadiyah writers also condemned as *bidah* the "prompting of the dead" (*talqin*), whereby at burial the deceased is given one last lesson on the fundamentals of Islam to prepare him for questioning by angels after death, on the basis that scripture does not cite this practice.²¹ Minor parts of ritual prayer also came under attack as *bidah*, such as the *ushalli*, a voicing of intention at the beginning of prayer, which the traditionalists insist is a valid part of worship and the reformists reject as not having been practiced during the lifetime of the Prophet Muhammad.²² Certain ceremonies and ritual meals commemorating the death of a Muslim, justified by some traditionalist groups, have been termed *churafat* in Muhammadiyah statements on the basis that the ceremony was common in the animism of the Indonesian archipelago and had no firm tradition in early Islam.²³ While serious efforts to remove those practices regarded as wrong began in the 1920's, a Muhammadiyah leader could state as late as 1965 that such practices were still

traditionalist in Al-Bahist, "Kronik-Komentar Islam," Gema Islam, 4, Nos. 79-80 (August 15, 1965), p. 5.

20. Note the use of Arabic for worship in *Kitab Imam dan Sembahjang* (Jogjakarta: Pusat Pimpinan Muhammadiyah Madjlis Tardjih, 1954).
21. T. Kamil, "Peredaran Hoekoem Agama Islam" in Pusat Pimpinan Muhammadiyah Madjlis Tabligh, Pantjaran Amal, 3, No. 9 (May 1938), pp. 206-212.
22. Hadji Abdul Malik Karim Amrullah (Hamka), Ajahku (Djakarta: Widjaya, 1958), p. 80.
23. Ibid., p. 81; Panitya Ketjil Madjlis Tabligh Sub Bid'ah Churafat, "Tabligh menghadapi Bid'ah-Churofat--Agama-agama lain, dsb.nja," Tuntunan Tabligh, 3, p. 50.

common among Indonesians Muslims and that, in fact, many "unenlightened" religious scholars still sanctioned their use.²⁴

Attempts to Formulate Muslim Law

To give assistance to Muhammadiyah members in their efforts to interpret scriptures consistently and in line with orthodox principles, the Muhammadiyah established a council of prominent religious scholars in 1927 to consider contentious matters of religious belief and practice. The purpose of such a council was to undercut the role of the individual religious scholars, especially those with a traditionalist outlook, who have had considerable influence on Muslim behavior throughout Muslim history. The practice among orthodox Muslims has been to consult one or more religious scholars about the proper way to resolve particular problems and then select a course of action based on that advice. Consequently, the move to establish the Madjlis Tardjih, as the Muhammadiyah's council was named, was an attempt to institutionalize that practice within the movement and limit the influences on its members of religious scholars outside the movement.

The Madjlis Tardjih was not charged with formulating an entirely new jurisprudential code similar to any of the classical codes followed by the traditionalists. Any such effort would obviously have perpetuated a system regarded as reprehensible in the Muhammadiyah by creating a substitution for the older code that would challenge the paramountcy of scripture as well. Rather, the principle was reaffirmed that constant interpretation of the sources was necessary to keep the law consistent with the needs of the contemporary period and that Muslims were obliged to derive principles directly from scripture without developing an elaborate jurisprudence.²⁵

The early programs of education in the Muhammadiyah and the emphasis of the movement on preaching (tabligh) demanded that a clear message regarding proper religious behavior be propounded. Since the educational and preaching programs were intended to deepen the belief of Indonesian Muslims, it was necessary to establish just what the obligations and the behavior of Muslims should be. In addition, the introduction of new technological developments from the West caused many Indonesians to question many traditional concepts of life, and a wide variety of opinions existed concerning proper belief and proper action for Muslims in the new era. Beginning in 1927, the Madjlis Tardjih has studied these

24. Hubeisj, "Bid'ah dan Klenik," Gema Islam, 5, No. 82 (August 1966), pp. 20-21, 29.

25. The organization and work of the Madjlis Tardjih is discussed in Noer, "The Rise and Development of the Modernist Muslim Movement," pp. 127-131; A. Hamidy Tatakangarsa, "Masalah Penyebaran dan Pelaksanaan Keputusan-keputusan Madjlis Tardjih," Suara Muhammadiyah, 47, No. 6 (March II, 1967), pp. 16-17, 20; Pusat Pimpinan Muhammadiyah Madjlis Tardjih, "Surat kepada Konperensi/Latihan Tabligh Muhammadiyah Seluruh Indonesia di Jogjakarta, Maret 29, 1954," in Tuntunan Tabligh, 3, pp. 62-64; Anggaran Dasar, pp. 30-32.

matters in the light of Islamic scriptures and tradition and made recommendations to the organization concerning such problems. In a sense, it is a new jurisprudence, for these recommendations are one source of guidance for other branches of the organization and for some members of the movement. The decisions, however, are not considered forever final and some decisions may be reconsidered at later sessions of the Madjlis Tardjih.²⁶

The work of the Madjlis Tardjih has ranged over a wide area of Muslim belief and behavior. Over the past fifty years, decisions have been made concerning proper belief and worship, ritual washing, ritual and ceremonies for the dead, fasting, taxation for pious purposes (*zakāt*), proper use of prayer, proper clothing for women, pious endowments (*waqf*), inheritance, the pilgrimage, matters concerning marriage, the role of women in society and religion, and clarification of the realm and duties of the Muslim community of believers.²⁷ The agenda of a recent session of the Madjlis Tardjih indicates the type of problem confronting the movement at present, for the following matters were listed for consideration: banks, insurance, the lottery, family planning, guidance for prayers, review of earlier decisions on certain ritual procedures and the use of portraits of the founder of the Muhammadiyah.²⁸

It would appear that the decisions of the Madjlis Tardjih have been consistent with historical Muslim practice, even though such decisions sometimes conflict with accepted practice in modern Indonesian society. This conservative viewpoint is apparent in matters involving religious obligation and belief and in matters concerning family life and the relationship of the sexes. In other areas, notably economics, medicine and certain areas concerning education, however, the council initially made significant departures from past Muslim practice and justified important innovations.²⁹ Since making the initial innovations, however, the council has been less concerned with the needs of a changing society and has tended to dwell on the same problems that were discussed earlier.

The work of the Madjlis Tardjih has had only limited success. Its decisions apparently have been consulted in the preparation of educational materials for the movement's schools and in certain other parts of the organization where they pertain. An article in *Suara Muhammadiyah* in 1968, written by a member of the council, lamented that the decisions were not widely followed among the general membership of the movement and stated that bidah and churafat

26. Anggaran Dasar, p. 31.

27. Listed in A. Hamidy Tatakangarsa, "Masalah Penjebaran dan Pelaksanaan Keputusan-keputusan Madjlis Tardjih," Suara Muhammadiyah, 47, No. 6 (March II, 1967), p. 17.

28. "Pendjelasan menghadapi Mu'tamar," Suara Muhammadiyah, 48, Nos. 13-14 (July I-II, 1968), p. 23.

29. The early decisions of the council are found in Kitab Beberapa Masalah. Putusan Madjlis Tardjih dalam Congres ke 18-22, 25-29 (Jogjakarta: Pusat Pimpinan Muhammadiyah Madjlis Tardjih, 1954), pp. 16-19.

were prevalent as a result. He urged that the movement improve its distribution techniques so that the council's decisions would reach all the members and that those decisions be given ample attention in programs and publications intended to inform the general membership.³⁰ Obviously, the attempt to have Muhammadiyah members utilize the Madjlis Tardjih rather than individual religious scholars has not succeeded. Certain scholars and certain religious schools are highly regarded as sources of advice on relating religious law to personal behavior, and Muhammadiyah members are among the many Muslims still consulting them. The principle has long been accepted in Islam that in matters of personal behavior, individual believers may consult any number of scholars, and this apparently still is the practice among many Muhammadiyah members.

There has been criticism of the Madjlis Tardjih by some members who believe it has been too timid and conservative in its judgments concerning Muslim adjustment to the modern world. Hamka, a prominent spokesman for reformist Islam and a leading member of the Muhammadiyah, harshly criticized the Madjlis Tardjih in the early 1960's, charging that its conservative attitudes had prevented it from making the necessary decisions for a genuine revitalization of Islamic society. His criticism centered largely on the unwillingness of the entire Muhammadiyah leadership to consider seriously certain areas of life, such as development of the arts and general culture. He stated that the leadership allowed itself to be dominated by organizational problems rather than considering those issues that applied to the advancement of society in general.³¹

An examination of *Suara Muhammadiyah*, the Muhammadiyah's official organ, indicates that the Madjlis Tardjih has not been at all influential among Muhammadiyah councils and has not given direction to the movement. It would appear that the importance of the Madjlis Tardjih has been to review problems involving religious tradition for general guidance and, perhaps more importantly, to certify official decisions of policy in religious terms.

Attitudes Toward Muslims Not Following Orthodox Islam

Muhammadiyah statements note that religious groups exist in Indonesia that are generally assigned the title "Muslim" and even refer to themselves as Muslims, yet do not conform to the general criteria for orthodoxy. For statistical purposes Indonesia is regarded as having a population that is ninety percent Muslim; of those assigned the title Muslim, about fifty percent are *santri*, that is, orthodox, leaving another fifty percent that fall into

30. A. Hamidy Tatakangarsa, "Masalah Penjebaran dan Pelaksanaan Keputusan-keputusan Madjlis Tardjih," *Suara Muhammadiyah*, 47, No. 6 (March 2, 1967), pp. 17, 20.

31. Hadji Abdul Malik Karim Amrullah (Hamka), "No. 50 Tahun Muhammadiyah," Djakarta, 1962.

several other categories. The attitude of the Muhammadiyah toward the various non-orthodox Muslims of Indonesia seems based on two factors: paramountcy of Islamic values over all others and pureness of belief and practice in religious matters. Muhammadiyah literature refers to the religiously disinterested *abangan* population of Java and to the followers of *adat* as examples of groups that have not yet fully comprehended the importance of Islam and accorded its values priority over indigenous value systems.³² The movement has also condemned specific beliefs and practices accepted by sizeable segments of Indonesian Muslims that the Muhammadiyah regards as remnants of animism or Hindu-Buddhist traditions and not part of good Islamic behavior and belief.

Attitudes toward these other Muslim groups has differed among the orthodox Muslims of Indonesia and, significantly, the official Muhammadiyah position has been that no one claiming to be a Muslim should be branded a heretic. While the movement has subscribed to general tolerance, it also has suggested limiting the influence of these other groups and persuading them to accept orthodoxy. Muhammadiyah writers have charged that ignorance is the primary reason many Indonesians claiming to be Muslims do not fulfill the criteria for orthodoxy. Consequently, the Muhammadiyah attitude has not been substantially different toward these groups than it has been toward orthodox Muslims who differ with the Muhammadiyah on points of doctrine, in other words, that once aware of the "correct" facts, followers of other religious viewpoints would be inclined to accept them and abandon "wrong" beliefs and practices. The stated aim of the Muhammadiyah toward these other Muslims then is to inform them of the doctrines the Muhammadiyah holds to be correct.

Muhammadiyah doctrine has always been opposed to certain specific beliefs and practices, common among Indonesians and popularly accepted as Islamic, which the movement finds contrary to Islam. There has been continuing concern about such beliefs; a concern that was apparent in the preaching of the founder of the Muhammadiyah and that has been reiterated in every period of its history since that time. In particular, the Muhammadiyah speakers and writers have attacked the concept of *keramat*, the belief that certain objects have hidden powers that can be harnessed by knowledgeable people for their own uses. There has been a widespread belief in the archipelago that specific tombs--those of certain Muslim saints, and saints of other religions--stones, trees, weapons and many other objects have such powers. This belief and the belief that certain practitioners (*dukun*) are able to heal, foretell events, predict propitious and unpropitious times and cast spells, is outside of Islam according to the Muhammadiyah viewpoint, although large numbers of Muslims in Indonesia subscribe to such beliefs. Since the *dukun* claims, or leads others to believe, that his capabilities rest on the supernatural--and quite clearly the supernatural concerned is not Allah--the Muhammadiyah position is that the practice attempts to establish supernatural beings alongside the One True God, and it brands such belief polytheism, a grievous error among orthodox Muslims. One Muhammadiyah spokesman, during the Japanese period, noted concerning this problem that, even if it were recognized that such powers came indirectly from God through intermediaries, the doctrine was still unacceptable to orthodox Muslims

32. H. Mohammed Saleh Su'aidy, "Sasaran dan Lapangan Penjiaran Islam dan Tabligh," Tuntunan Tabligh, 3, pp. 28-34.

since a key point in Muhammad's ministry was that no intercessor existed between God and man. Such a belief in secret powers has, consequently, been regarded in Muhammadijah writings as a violation of basic Muslim belief, and Muslims are warned to avoid such belief.³³

The general view in the Muhammadijah is that certain sects existing in Indonesia that espouse syncretic views on religion are outside Islam. Such groups bring together practices and beliefs from Islam, Christianity, Buddhism and Hinduism--including beliefs and practices regarded as heretical by the orthodox in these religions--although the principal religious content of such sects is usually a somewhat sophisticated form of animism. In nearly all cases, these sects are marked by a preference for mystical practice and intuition, rather than the ritual, prescribed obligations and rational law that dominate most of orthodox Islam. The early reformist Muslims on Sumatra were particularly opposed to mystical practice, and the Muhammadijah has similarly adopted an attitude of suspicion toward all mystical orders, although admitting that certain types of mysticism are permitted by Islam. The Muhammadijah does imply that many of these mystical sects clearly outside Islam follow practices that are similar enough to Islamic mysticism that they may really only be deviant forms which could, with some changes, readily identify with Islam.³⁴

A Muhammadijah committee, studying this problem in 1954, stated that ignorance, the dominance of particular individuals and political factors were the primary reasons such sects existed. The committee suggested that since diverse reasons accounted for their existence, then diverse responses had to be employed to convert those sects to genuine Islam. It outlined a series of measures to be followed by Muhammadijah activists in attempting to bring the followers of those sects into orthodox Islam. Toward those sects seemingly based on ignorance and misinformation, the committee suggested that its missionaries attempt to acquaint the followers of such sects with forms of mysticism acceptable to Muslim orthodoxy (*taṣawwuf*). While there is no great enthusiasm in the Muhammadijah for mystical practice, many members apparently believe that, in the conversion of such sects, *taṣawwuf* can be employed profitably. In the case where a sect was under the dominance of a strong person, the committee recommended that Muhammadijah missionaries infiltrate the sect and, after establishing themselves as members, attempt to take it over. Such action can often be successful, stated the report, because the leaders of such sects almost always employ their control for personal profit rather than for serious religious practice and

33. K. H. M. Mas Mansoer, Risalah Tauhid dan Sjikir (Surabaya: Peneleh, 1949), esp. pp. 9-10, 61.

34. K. R. H. Asnawi, "Tabligh menghadapi aliran Masjarakat," Tuntunan Tabligh, 3, p. 25. A significant number of orthodox Muslims in Indonesia are sympathetic to certain forms of mysticism. Generally, the Muhammadijah challenges the values attached to mysticism and opposes the claim of many mystics that their activity absolves them from the normal obligations and ritual required of Muslims.

are unable to compete with sincere religious activists. Once these sects are taken over, the members should be acquainted with proper orthodox Muslim beliefs and practices. The committee maintained that the sects that existed for a political purpose should be tolerated and recognized for what they were, since they were not really oriented toward religious matters.³⁵ Despite such advice on how to deal with these various sects, Muhammadijah efforts aimed at converting their members to orthodox Islam has apparently not been at all successful. The mystical nature of such groups does not lend itself to easy conversion to formal law and behavior. Moreover, the initiate system of gaining entrance to the sects has made it difficult for orthodox Muslim groups to infiltrate them. Since many such sects are composed of believers who are not on the best terms with orthodox Muslims, that is, are recruited from non-orthodox groups that have been suspicious of the orthodox groups and have followed different life-styles, contact has not been easy. Such sects have been inclined to form alliances and reach accommodation with non-Islamic movements, as was the case in the 1950's and 1960's, when the Communist Party influenced and dominated several such mystical sects.³⁶ This identification with non-Islamic groups is regarded by many of these sects as a necessary protection against orthodox Muslim aspirations which are viewed as wanting to eliminate all non-orthodox life-styles and persecute the followers of such sects.

With other orthodox Muslims in Indonesia, those in the Muhammadijah expect the state to accept the orthodox version of Islamic teachings as a standard against which all other interpretations are to be measured. Since the creation of an independent Indonesia the Ministry of Religious Affairs, dominated by the orthodox Muslim political parties for over two decades, has in fact accepted this position and, in line with that philosophy, has attempted to limit sects in Indonesia that syncretize Islam with other religious values.³⁷ This effort has been supported, and even promoted, at particular times in the past decade, by several of the regional military commanders, who have regarded such sects as cells and potential cells for communist organization and activity.³⁸ At certain times, then, the state has moved against some leaders and movements that do not subscribe to the values and practices of orthodox Islam. In 1967, for example, Ki Ranajuda, the leaders of a sect, was imprisoned on the grounds that his teachings--which the state attorney pointedly indicated were not in accord with those of orthodox Islam--had produced personality changes among several of his followers, leading to psychosis in at least two cases.³⁹ Again, in 1965 and 1966, the Mbah Sjiro sect was proscribed in Central Java and its members incarcerated and persecuted because of the group's close association with the Communist

35. Ibid.

36. Djakarta Times, May 27, 1962, p. 2.

37. Justus M. van der Kroef, "New Religious Sects in Java," Far Eastern Survey, 30, No. 4 (February 1961), p. 25.

38. Djakarta Times, March 10, 1967, p. 1; S. Irsjad, "Laporan dari Hutan Blora," Angkatan Bersendjata, March 16-April 3, 1967.

39. Angkatan Bersendjata, April 5, 1967, p. 2; April 6, 1967, p. 2.

Party.⁴⁰ With this punitive effort to check the growth of certain forms of non-orthodox Muslim organizations, the Muhammadiyah appears to be in full agreement. The youth section of the Muhammadiyah held a meeting in 1965, to which it invited representatives of several orthodox religious groups, and attempted to define just which beliefs and practices would be permissible and which ones would not. In the ensuing public discussion, which attracted even the attention of President Sukarno, the prominent Muhammadiyah leaders let it be known that they agreed that the sects had to be limited for the good of the Muslim society of Indonesia.⁴¹

Among many of the non-orthodox Muslims of Indonesia, the force of local customary law existing in several of the traditional societies of the archipelago has allowed conversion of their followers to Islam in principle and even allowed certain Muslim ceremonies to be established alongside older adat ceremonies--such as marriage, circumcision and death ceremonies--and, generally, it has been difficult for Islamic values to replace those of the adat systems. Even where Islamic practices have been accepted, they have generally been integrated piecemeal into the adat system, where the meaning of the practice is often changed. But the initial accommodation between Islam and local culture has not been permanent, and the relationship can undergo significant change when purists on either side seek the dominance of their values over those of the other side. Consequently, in several areas, notably the Minangkabau area, Islamic values have gained in influence and have significantly changed the adat system. Despite its gains, however, Islam remains tied to the local adat system and is in many respects defined by it.⁴²

As is the case in other Muslim organizations, the Muhammadiyah leaders have expressed concern about the competition between adat and the demands of Islam on individual Muslims. Apparently, consensus in the Muhammadiyah is not against adat *per se*, believing that where it does not conflict with Muslim religious obligations, adat law can function undisturbed. But the movement does recognize that adat is a totalistic system demanding first loyalty of its followers and, as such, adat determines which Muslim values will be brought into the adat system and how much importance such values should have. A 1956 working program referred to this matter when it called on Muhammadiyah members to "regulate their manner of living concerning daily actions such as births, weddings and deaths so that Muslim families constitute a Muslim village community, a Muslim city community, and ultimately an Islamic state community."⁴³ In the

40. Angkatan Bersendjata, March 16, 1967.

41. Umar Hubeisj, "Bid'ah dan Klenik," Gema Islam, 5, No. 82 (August 1966), pp. 20-21; Al-Bahist, "Kronik-Komentar Islam," Gema Islam, 4, No. 75 (June 1, 1965), pp. 4-5.

42. Taufik Abdullah, "Adat and Islam: An Examination of Conflict in Minangkabau," Indonesia, No. 2 (October 1966), pp. 1-24.

43. Chittah Muhammadiyah 1956-1959 (Jogjakarta: Pusat Pimpinan Muhammadiyah, 1956), p. 2.

first instance then, Muslims are to replace the supremacy of adat with the supremacy of Islam by following strictly orthodox Muslim religious practices and rituals. This action would, of course, challenge the adat systems and, at the same time, promote the concept of community (ummah) that is so strong in orthodox Muslim doctrine.

In line with its efforts to elevate Islam to a superior position over adat in society, the Muhammadiyah actions have attempted to alter some matters in society that represent control by adat. The movement has made efforts to bring about changes concerning woman's role in society and marriage and to bring it into harmony with the orthodox view of just what that role should be. In this respect, it opposed the matriarchal social form of the Minangkabau area prior to World War II and urged adoption of a patriarchal form more consistent with Islam. In other areas, it has attempted to have Muslim rules of inheritance established to replace adat regulations that are radically different. During the Dutch period, when the role of adat in regulating society was an important concern, the movement was highly vocal in opposing efforts by certain Dutch administrators to promote adat law, particularly when it was at the expense of Muslim law.⁴⁴ For example, the Muhammadiyah, with other Muslim groups, protested the 1939 decision of Dutch authorities to take jurisdiction over matters of inheritance away from religious courts (*priesterraden*) and to give it to the native courts where it could be decided on the basis of adat law.⁴⁵

The influence of modernization, particularly improved communication and the impact of a national government, has significantly affected the traditional adat systems within Indonesia. While such adat systems remain strong in some areas, they are in most cases no longer the totalistic value systems of the area each dominates. Consequently the clash between orthodox Islam and adat is no longer as fierce or as emotional as it was prior to World War II. The effort of the Muhammadiyah in this area remains clear, but it is stated with less urgency, reflecting these changed conditions. Specific instances of conflict are not emphasized in the media of the movement as they once were.

Attitudes Toward the Secularists

There is an awareness in the Muhammadiyah that the influence of Western thought and the technical civilization that the West has developed has had an impact on certain Muslims and produced particular attitudes that are not always fully in accord with orthodox Islam. A Muhammadiyah committee, studying this problem in 1954, noted that among the younger educated group, Muslims were less inclined toward traditional values in general, and consequently they were less concerned about the technical teachings of classical Islam.⁴⁶ The

44. Jan Prins, Adat en Islamietische plichtenleer in Indonesië ('s-Gravenhage: van Hoeve, 1948), pp. 11-13.

45. Harry J. Benda, The Crescent and the Rising Sun (The Hague: van Hoeve, 1958), p. 88.

46. H. Mohammed Saleh Su'aidy, "Sasaran dan Lapangan Penjiaran Islam dan Tabligh," Tuntunan Tabligh, 3, p. 30.

committee report stated that youth opposed and rejected dogmatic and legalistic interpretations of the lessons in the scriptures and wanted instead religious clarifications that related to the other fields of knowledge that they had been introduced to in their schooling. The committee sympathized with that viewpoint and noted that formal religion had its limitations. It noted also that, for that very reason, the Muhammadiyah schools had always been concerned with preparing students in general studies as well as religious studies. The reformist philosophy of the Muhammadiyah has always included a recognition of the technological and sociological developments of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and maintained that Muslims could adapt to such developments without loss of religious identity. The reformist dispute with the traditionalists concerning the jurisprudential codes was directly related to this matter, for the Muhammadiyah's position has been that such codes have perpetuated past values and a life-style that are no more sanctioned by Islam than current life-styles. The reformist call for constant reinterpretation of scripture has aimed at keeping the genuine values of Islam clear in the minds of Muslims so that they could apply them properly in the new milieu, changing those things that properly needed changing.

The Muhammadiyah has been prepared to deal with this problem of modernization and willing to accept many of the new requirements for modern living. It was an early proponent of modern medical practice and sponsored clinics where Indonesians could receive such medical care.⁴⁷ To do this meant to reject several classical theories in Islam about blood transfusion and certain medicines which would have prevented their use. In industrialization and trade matters, the movement modified the traditional ban on usury by allowing financial institutions utilizing the principle of interest, such as banks and cooperatives, to operate more easily. Before and after World War II, when the cooperative movement was strong in Indonesia, the Muhammadiyah was active in the field establishing and operating cooperatives among its own membership. In general, the Muhammadiyah has viewed economic advance as a necessity of a healthy society, but its statements on the subject have cautioned that the desire for economic gain should not degenerate into gross materialism.⁴⁸ The official statements of the Muhammadiyah have noted that women have a role in the broader society and encouraged them to take part in certain activities. Like most orthodox groups, however, the Muhammadiyah has consistently held that men and women have different areas of responsibility in life and that woman's role is more limited than that of man. Throughout Muhammadiyah's fifty year existence, however, the area of activity for women has steadily decreased.⁴⁹ In governmental matters, traditional patterns of rule

47. Blumberger, "Moehammadiyah," Encyclopaedië van Nederlandsche Oost-Indië, VI.

48. L. H. Palmer, "Modern Islam in Indonesia: The Muhammadiyah after Independence," Pacific Affairs, 27, No. 3 (September 1954), p. 261.

49. For comments about the Muhammadiyah's attitudes toward women, see Nj. Aisjah Dachlan, "Perkawinan dalam Islam," Kiblat, 16, No. 22 (April 1969), pp. 15-17; Deliar Noer, "The Rise and Development of the Modernist Muslim Movement," pp. 124-125.

in Muslim areas--despotic forms, such as sultanates--have been rejected as outmoded and not sanctioned by religious teachings. The movement has accepted the more modern and popular forms of political organization based on democratic principles.

The modernist approach of the Muhammadiyah has stopped far short of complete acceptance of Western theory and practice concerning the state, society and religion. Muhammadiyah statements have maintained that Muslims must continue to have a firm identification with the traditional ritual and beliefs of Islam, a view which runs counter to the spirit of anti-dogmatism of the Western educated Indonesians, who have tended to accept the moral and ethical teachings, but not many of the other traditional obligations of Islam. Muhammadiyah attitudes concerning woman's role in society may have been liberal among orthodox Muslim groups but, among secularists, it has not been regarded as liberal at all. In political matters as well, the Muhammadiyah position has been that the state must recognize certain Muslim teachings, establish those teachings as the national philosophy and use those teachings to develop regulations for governing the nation. Secular Muslims, such as the late President Sukarno, the late Muhammad Yamin and Abdulgani, have emphasized the importance of the state as the final arbiter in all matters of national concern. According to their conception, no one of the religious viewpoints in Indonesia dominated the nation and, consequently, no one religion should have control over the others. Rather, for mutual harmony, the state should be neutral in such matters. The state might recognize the existence of God, as the 1945 constitution did, and the state might even recognize the importance of certain religious practices and facilitate such practices through a religious affairs ministry. Prominent in this secular philosophy, however, has been the belief that some distance has to be maintained between the state and formal religion, that is, that the two remain distinct and separate. The secularists also held that the state should decide what its dominant concerns were to be in formulating law and policy, and that it need not be regulated by the interests of any religion. The most obvious implication of this secular philosophy then was that national law did not need to be based on religious principles, but could be formulated on the basis of what the state regarded as appropriate at any given time.⁵⁰ In the 1930's and the 1950's, when the discrepancies between the secularists and the orthodox Muslims were being debated, there was a wide difference among orthodox Muslims on the extent and form that Islam should have in the operation of the state, but all were agreed that Islam had to be an integral feature of the state. The particular viewpoint of the Muhammadiyah was representative of a large number of reformist Muslims--but certainly not all of them--in that it called for the basic principles of Islam to serve as a guide for law and for state policy and rejected formal jurisprudential law codes as proposed by the traditionalist Muslims. The Muhammadiyah's stress on the importance of society, while recognized as valid by many other Muslims, was particularly its own. The

50. This secular philosophy is expounded in many documents, of which the following are representative: Sukarno, "Surat-Surat Islam dari Endeh," Dibawah Bendera Revolusi (Djakarta: Panitia Penerbit Dibawah Bendera Revolusi, 1963), 1, pp. 325-344; Ruslan Abdulgani, Api Islam dalam Koboran Api Revolusi Indonesia (Djakarta: Prapantja, 1965).

Muhammadiyah philosophy then, which had its clearest exposition during the early 1950's, maintained that establishment of an Islamic society in Indonesia was the essential feature of an Islamic state, and that Muslim control of the state would not automatically produce an Islamic state. Once this ideal society had been instituted, the Islamic state would follow automatically as a consequence. The spirit generated by an Islamic society would determine that the constitution and the law established in the nation would reflect the commands and prohibitions of God as contained in Islamic scripture. In such a "right-guided society," all laws legislated by the government would then be made on the basis of right and wrong according to the principles of Islam as interpreted for the contemporary era. In this way, the shortcomings of most societies, which usually choose laws and policies reflecting the selfishness of certain individuals and groups, would be avoided.⁵¹

In debates held in the Constituent Assembly in 1957 regarding the basic philosophy of the Indonesian state, a prominent Muhammadiyah leader, Kasman Singodimedjo, speaking as a member of Masjumi and not necessarily as a spokesman for the Muhammadiyah, made a long speech on behalf of Islam as the basic state philosophy. He avoided discussion of any actual laws that would be placed in effect if Islam did become the state philosophy. He implied, however, that Islam did have certain values that could be converted into law and that could impose certain obligations that would aid in the erection of an orderly and prosperous state. He noted that Islam contained principles, which, if applied in the operation of any state, would guarantee that concerned public and political figures would control it; that is, if Islamic values permeated society and particularly education, leaders arising from that society would be steeped in those Islamic values. Speaking in the terminology of the day, when Sukarno's phrase of "exploitation of man by man" was popular, Kasman noted that Islam would guarantee equality among the nation's population and prevent exploitation of one person by another. He maintained that by establishing the ethical and moral obligations contained in Islamic teaching throughout the nation, fewer cases of greed would exist, since clear guidelines would be available for the proper uses of wealth.⁵²

Political Action in the Contemporary Period

Despite belief within the Muhammadiyah that the state should have an Islamic character, the decisions of the movement's councils and congresses have repeatedly dissociated the Muhammadiyah from political activity. This viewpoint was modified at particular

-
51. "Ringkasan Pidato Ketua Pusat Pimpinan Muhammadiyah Indonesia A. R. Sutan Mansur," Universitas Muhammadiyah Pembukaan Fakultas Falsafah dan Hukum Muhammadiyah (Sumatra Tengah: Universitas Muhammadiyah, 1956), pp. 43-44.
 52. "Pidato Kasman Singodimedjo di Komisi II Konstituante," Tentang Dasar Negara Republik Indonesia dalam Konstituante (Bandung: Konstituante Republik Indonesia, 1958), 1, pp. 166-187.

periods, as in 1958 and in 1966, to allow the movement to undertake a limited political role, but in each instance the Muhammadiyah has retreated to its basic position after a short time, claiming that as an organization it should not have a political role. From the very beginning, however, individual members were active in political activities outside the movement, and they very frequently reflected the concerns of the movement. Moreover, the political attitudes of these members have, on occasion, been highly influential, as in the 1955 elections, when it was estimated that the success of the Masjumi party in certain Outer Island areas was due to Muhammadiyah support there.⁵³

The general attitude prevailing in the Muhammadiyah regarding political activity is apparent in its official statements during the past several years. After political inactivity during the Sukarno era, the movement modified its restrictions concerning an active political role in early 1966. Even though its leadership refused--as it had several times in the past--to allow the movement actually to become a political party itself, there was a belief prevalent among the leaders that politics could be employed as one means of promoting its aspirations. Many Muhammadiyah members joined the several action groups that were created in the 1966-67 period to work with the army in removing Sukarno from the presidency.⁵⁴ Muhammadiyah members also were active in establishing the new Partai Muslimin Indonesia in 1968, and an official Muhammadiyah statement issued at that time maintained that the "new party deserved the support of Indonesian Muslims."⁵⁵ The same statement also reaffirmed its support of the Suharto government by recognizing Pantja Sila as the state philosophy and stating that the New Order (Orde Baru) guaranteed "truth and justice as well as human and democratic rights." The statement concluded that a government following such ideals would "produce a nation and society, just and prosperous as desired by Allah."⁵⁶ The statement seemed to imply, however, that such a prosperous and just nation would be fully instituted only when the new Muslim party became influential in the political affairs of the nation, and if the government gave heed to its advice.

The same declaration that supported establishment of the new party also stated that the Muhammadiyah would continue to serve in the area of worship (*ibadah*), education and social welfare, but not in politics.⁵⁷ This declaration suggests that the Muhammadiyah leadership is willing to confine the movement's efforts to those perennial concerns of the movement, since its interests in the political field are pursued by a sympathetic Muslim party that can serve as a political vehicle for Muhammadiyah members. Significantly, the

53. H. Surono, "Masjumi-Muhammadiyah," Adi 1, 9, No. 7 (April 1, 1956), p. 4.

54. Angkatan Bersendjata, May 7, 1966, p. 2.

55. "Pernyataan P. P. Muhammadiyah terhadap diakui berdirinya Partai Muslimin Indonesia," Suara Muhammadiyah, 48, No. 5 (March 1, 1968), p. 3.

56. Ibid.

57. Ibid.

declaration made no mention of Islamic laws or of an Islamic society, terms which in the Constitutional Period were the indicators or orthodox Muslim thinking regarding the relationship of the state and Islam. The terms were discredited during the Sukarno period, and the Suharto government, favoring a continuation of the secular state, has not encouraged any return to use of those phrases which arouse strong divisive feelings among Indonesians. It must be assumed, however, that the Muhammadiyah still favors the establishment of Islamic law in Indonesia, but for practical reasons this goal is regarded as the responsibility of the Muslim parties which the Muhammadiyah supports and where Muhammadiyah members participate as they wish. At the same time, the Muhammadiyah's activities can continue to be directed toward construction of an Islamic society; a goal its leaders long have maintained is more important than an Islamic state.